

For Immediate Release:

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**City Hall Falcon Update:
Three Chicks Growing Rapidly, Banding Day Set
*San José Children Can Enter Naming Contest until May 16***

SAN JOSE – Since their Earth Day birthday a week ago, the three young peregrine falcon chicks born in a nestbox located atop a utility shaft at San José City Hall, are progressing rapidly and are now more than quadruple their size at birth.

The remaining egg laid by resident peregrine falcon, Clara, will likely not hatch, experts say. “The egg may have been the first that Clara laid this season and possibly was not fertilized,” said Glenn R. Stewart, of the University of California Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group. On Banding Day, the researchers plan to remove the egg from the nest so they can conduct tests.

Falcon fans are encouraged by the progress the three chicks are making. “We had three healthy chicks last year, and we are delighted that our three Earth Day chicks appear to be growing rapidly,” said Mayor Chuck Reed.

Both parents, Clara and Carlos, have been taking shifts protecting the chicks, hunting for food, and feeding the young. Like babies of all species, the chicks spend most of their time eating and sleeping, watched by thousands of viewers of the FalconCam.

Last year, viewers of the City Hall FalconCam witnessed the hatching, growth, and subsequent first flight of three baby falcons, Esperanza, Hiko, and Spirit. Proud parents, Clara and José, witnessed their three children flying out of the nest in mid-June and flying away from the area permanently in early September. Father, José, also disappeared and a new male falcon garnered Clara’s affection. Dubbed Carlos, because he was regularly spotted perched atop buildings on San Carlos Street, this young tiercel (male falcon) is doing well in his role as a new mate and father.

The Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group and the City of San José have set Friday, May 16 to place identity bands on the chicks and determine their gender. This dramatic event will require scientists to rappel over the top of City Hall, onto the ledge where the nestbox is located, while fending off the protective falcon parents.

The identity bands are an invaluable tool for scientists and birdwatchers. Carlos wears an identity band that identifies him as a falcon bred in captivity and released into the wild by the Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group. Birdwatchers in the East Bay have identified a young female peregrine living on the Siebel building in Emeryville as Esperanza, from last year's City Hall clutch.

Children and youth between the ages of 5 and 17 are invited to help name this year's three falcon chicks. The entry forms can be downloaded by visiting Mayor Reed's website at www.sanjoseca.gov/mayor and clicking on the "Name that Falcon" banner. The deadline for entries is Friday, May 16.

Those who are interested in seeing the City Hall falcons in person, can either visit the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 150 E. San Fernando Street, to use the Orion telescope on the 8th floor, or view them from the top floor of the Fourth Street garage (on Fourth Street, between Santa Clara and San Fernando Streets). The falcon chicks are only visible on the internet via the FalconCam. Go to the City of San José's Website at www.sanjoseca.gov or visit the Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group at www.scpbrg.org.

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